



**ST MATTHEWS ALBURY**

**ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

**10<sup>th</sup> December 2023**

**ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**  
**ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2023 AGENDA**  
**ST MATTHEWS ALBURY**  
**Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> December 2023**  
**10:30 am**

Chairman: Father Peter Macleod-Miller

- 1) Welcome; Prayer
- 2) Apologies
- 3) Minutes of previous meeting
- 4) Matters arising from minutes
- 5) Correspondence
- 6) Annual reports:

Parish AGM 2022 minutes	Rosalind Brown
Rector's Report	Fr Peter Macleod-Miller
including Mission Action Implementation	
Treasurer's Annual Report	Mark Carden
St Matthew's Bell Ringers	Pam Thorman
Children's Church & Mother's Union	Julie Scott/Janette Kettyle
Choir & Music Report	Malcolm Halford
Craft & Embroidery Group	Jill Fielder
Emergency Food Program	Barbara Hoodless
Flower Guild	Helen Martin
St Matthew's Op Shop	John & Lyn Schuberg
Pastoral Care	Annette Gorham
Safe Church report	Mark Carden
St Matthew's Village	Victoria Chick
St Matthew's Music Association	Victoria Chick
Properties and Maintenance	Mark Carden
St Matthew's Garden incl Memorial Gdn	Robyn Gibbs
Parish Office Organisation	Annette Gorham
- 7) Elect one or more persons to Audit the Annual Statements of Account for the current year
- 8) General business as permitted by the Chairman

**St Matthew's Annual Parish Meeting**  
**Minutes of meeting held on**  
**Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> October 2022**

**1. Welcome & prayer**

Father Peter

**2. Attendance & apologies**

Rosalind Brown

**Attendance:**

Aldridge Jack, Aldridge Kate, Baker Bryan, Brown Rosalind, Carden, Mark, Cherry Kathy, Cheŕle Linda, Chick Vicki, Clout Patricia, Draper Frank, Draper Jan, Farrington Denise, Fielder Jill, Fietz Ray, Frew-Kleeman Judith, Fyfe Sue, Hare Paul, Hendriks Martinn, Hoodless Barbara, Horsburgh Pam, Jardine Frances, Lloyd Don, Lloyd Trish, Mackay Gill, Macleod-Miller Father Peter, Pearce Gillian, Reid Christine, Ribstein Hannah, Scholz Jan, Slade Robyne, Stevenson Stephanie, Thomas Chris, Voogt Helen, Wellard Robin, Wilkinson Belinda

**Apologies**

Crossley Keith, Gorham Annette, Jackson-Jones Iris, Kennedy Kaye, Mackay Bill, Macleod-Miller Sandra, Moffit Sadie, Murphy Noela, Ricketts Ron, Riverwood congregation, Schuberg John, Shearer Margaret, Sizeland Shirley, Snow Annie, Thorman Pam, Trainer Kelley,

**3. Minutes of previous Annual Parish Meeting**

Father Peter suggested the minutes of the previous Annual meeting be accepted

Moved by Vicki Chick

Seconded by Robin Wellard

**4. Matters arising from minutes**

Nil

**5. Correspondence**

Nil

**6. Annual reports**

(Refer to booklet for Annual Parish Meeting 30 October 2022)

Moved by Jan Scholz

Seconded by Belinda Wilkinson

**Father Peter's report:**

After acknowledging the first peoples of this land and paying respects to their Elders past, present and emerging, Father Peter read from his report and described that the yearly headlines could be the reign and the rain!

A splendid service marked **the passing of Queen Elizabeth II** including wonderful music associated with Her Majesty's life. This & farewells for members of the congregation and the wider community continued to resonate over the Border.

The use of modern technology through Livestreaming had remained even as Covid restrictions had been lifted and the increasing use of photo tributes had made real sense of the very considerable investment in appropriate sound and visual capacity.

Every day at St Matthew's was an expression of the Mission Action Plan Implementation and of the Parish's continuing Social Justice and Advocacy. **Pastoral Care and Mission** to assist the community took up the most time and involved operation of the emergency of food room, Parish Office, Op Shop, Garden, Choir, Organists, Sanctuary Team, Pastoral Care team, Bell Tower, Flowers, Parish Council, Digital Sign, Quiet Communion, Tunes on Tuesday, Chamber Music Festival, Music Association lessons, livestreaming and media involvement managed by James Flores, connections with Albury High, The Scott's School and Trinity Anglican College, St Matthew's Village, Craft Group, Children's Church, Mothers Union and Chaplaincy through Albury Wodonga Health. It had been a special pleasure to welcome the new Principal of Trinity Anglican College Dr Adrian Johnson. Adrian and his wife Leanne had already become regular parishioners, with Leanne contributing as one of the valued Office

Volunteers.

**Sunday Services** often highlighted the particular ministries when readers from various parts of the St Matthew's picture were identified, and that it remained true that all those who were involved liturgically had another real ministry outside the Church Service. This spoke about integrity and a real presence, not just in the Eucharist, but in the community where they had been planted. A measure of this connection was found in ongoing relationships with community groups and organisations focused on community welfare and included service organisations, Defence, Aged and Palliative Care providers, Funeral Directors, Arts and Cultural organisations, Politicians at every level of Government and corporate and community partners.

**Covid and post-Covid changes** continued to impact on the life of the Parish in positive ways. Covid safe communion meant intincting the wafer from the Common Cup by the Eucharistic Assistant, having sanitised their hands and using silver sugar tongs, both in Church Services at St Matthew's and in Aged Care facilities. All services used individually printed Orders of Service instead of sharing Prayer and Hymn books, but this increased reliance on the photocopier.

The post-Covid **Service pattern** had changed public worship with the emphasis clearly on helping the St Matthew's Community be connected wherever they were. While the Sunday 9am Eucharist, monthly Children's Church, Evensong and weekly Wednesday 10:30 Eucharist continued there were many more pastoral services at Aged Care facilities and pastoral visits as well as reaching out to a much wider congregation through keeping connected, recorded services on YouTube which were followed by previous parishioners including former member of the altar team, Kaye West, the website and via Facebook. **St Matthew's had surprisingly come out of Covid with a much wider connection with the Anglican tradition and the wider community than any other time in the Parish's history.**

Every Sunday Service at St Matthew's included Acknowledgement of Country, First peoples and all others who have followed aŕer and the farming community in particular being remembered. Taking up the **collection** by handing around the plate had been suspended during the Covid period with most people Direct Debiting and using eftpos Tap-n-Go and it was true the Parish had suffered a great deal in income just at the time when outgoings to assist the community had never been greater.

While the historic connection to the Anglican Communion and the Diocese of Wangaratta was greatly valued it was a reality that the energy and direction of St Matthew's came from the local congregation and community. With the growth of housing in **Thurgoona** & 10 years since St John's Thurgoona had been going it had been noticeable that many more families from that part of Albury were attending or connecting with St Matthew's.

Bishop Clarence and Michelle had done a great deal to mend the difficulties of the past as the Parish walked hopefully into the future and Bishop Andrew Curnow had been of immense assistance and support both to himself and the Executive of the Parish.

St Matthew's continued to plan and negotiate over the future of the old Rectory building which houses the Office and Emergency Welfare assistance and until this year provided accommodation for a Caretaker.

**Particular thanks** went to the Wardens - Mark Carden, Victoria Chick and in particular Robyne Slade, whose knowledge of how the Parish and the Diocese worked & a knowledge of what's gone on before has given clout to operating St Matthew's. Also Parish Council, Annette Gorham and all of the Pastoral and Office Volunteers. Mark Carden had done an amazing job in the areas of finance and Safe Church and Compliance. Deb Davenport had returned to the office one day each week with particular focus on weddings and administration connected to baptisms and funerals. The honorary assistant Clergy - Fr Malcolm, Rev. Michelle and Rev. Paul, Rev. Catherine and Rev. Cathy - were a constant source of encouragement and wisdom, including weekly meeting with Malcolm about music for the upcoming week's services where Malcolm won if there are any arguments because the organ is louder than him! Also Paul & Michelle Wood who brought experience from other places they had worked - the fact that they were not paid for the work that they did was not a measure of how valuable they were, it was a testament to their dedication.

Father Peter concluded that each and every organisation and individual that made up the St Matthew's family was what the parish relied on and despite the many challenges of St Matthews across the region, the Parish had never been more important as evidenced by the avalanche of Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals that we were joyfully navigating.

Father Peter presented Robyne (who was stepping down as a Warden, but remaining on Parish Council).

#### **Treasurer's report - Mark Carden**

Mark began by saying the Parish were able to finish the Financial Year in September in a positive financial position of \$2,269, this being a good result on the back of Covid and shutdowns.

The most significant saving had continued to be made by not having a full time Office administration person and that the team of volunteers who worked in the office throughout the week represented a saving of \$35,000. It had been necessary to employ Deborah Davenport for 3 hours per week to complete the necessary government registration work for funerals, weddings and baptisms.

The volunteers who maintained the gardens and did the cleaning and maintenance around the church also represented a significant saving and the Parish executive greatly appreciated this. The presentation of the church and grounds brought joy and peace to many people and it was a credit to the workers that quietly made things happen. And he'd been told before the meeting the embroidery group are not retiring!

Referring to the financial reports which had been handed out for the meeting (from MYOB accounting package and have not been audited due to the early date for this meeting - the Audited Financial reports would be circulated as soon as they had been received), Mark said the contribution to the Diocese was expected to increase after the last 3 years where costs were maintained at the 2019 rate due to subsidies by the Diocese, with the exception of a small increase in the rector's stipend.

Giving during 2022 was \$83,000 and the budgeted figure for giving had been set with a modest increase on last year. It was to be noted that the Parish continued to draw down \$60,000 from investment interest.

Income via fund-raising had also been set in the budget as a modest target given that we were recommencing after a period of uncertainty in holding events. Mark said he would be recommending to Parish Council to consider strategic use of efforts to increase fund-raising as a priority and added fund-raising would be the best way to minimise the projected budget deficit for 2023.

A 12-month target of \$40,000 gross sales had been set for the Op Shop and Mark encouraged parishioners to make quality donations to the Op shop and also make a purchase of a pre-loved bargain. He said it should be noted that rent for the Op shop is \$14,544.

The Highgrove rental property owned by the parish had provided much needed income after the weekly rent was increased, but unfortunately, the need for expensive repairs continued to crop up with the property.

\$22,000 in donations were significant in 2022 in supporting the work of St Matthews. However, as donations varied markedly from year to year, Mark suggested that donations should be seen as a bonus rather than a given for budget processes.

The cost of utilities in the 2023 budget was a concern (an overall budget deficit of \$18000.00 being forecast), with press reports of 30 to 50% increases. For this reason the wardens & Parish council would continue to work to investigate government grants to convert current church lighting to low-cost LED. Mark said every time the "after-hours green button" on the air-conditioning and heating was pressed, that was another \$100 cost to run for two hours and the facility should be used sparingly.

It had been decided while maintaining an online presence had a cost, it has been well received and deemed a valuable use of funds.

Jill Fielder responded to Mark's point about the Embroidery Group.

She elaborated that Sadie Moffit was no longer able to *co-ordinate* the group, but asked that parishioners who wanted to make craft/sewn items could make them at home for pooling even if they couldn't go to meetings. She said there was only a core group of four people who had been meeting, but if others wanted to contribute in this other way to let her know. This would enable St Matthews to still have small, beautifully made Christian gifts available for people to buy.

**7. Motion: That one or more persons be engaged to audit the Annual Statements of Account for St Matthew's for the current year.**

Mark Carden moved that the firm Stewart, Tracey & Mylon in Wodonga be used.

Seconded by Vicki Chick.

**8a. Motion: That members of Parish Council (including Wardens) for St Matthews be nominated as follows:**

**Wardens** - Mark Carden, Vicki Chick, Paul Hare

**Parish Council** - Rosalind Brown, Mark Carden, Kathy Cherry, Victoria Chick, Annette Gorham, Paul Hare, Martin Hendriks, Barbara Hoodless, Sally Morris, Gillian Pearce, Robyne Slade, Graham Stevens

**8b. Motion: That lay representatives to Synod for St Matthews be nominated as follows:**

Mark Carden

Robyne Slade

**8c. Motion: That alternative lay representative to Synod for St Matthews be nominated as follows:**

John Schuberg

#### **8d. Motion: That Parochial nominators for St Matthews be nominated as follows:**

Mark Carden

Robyne Slade

**Motions 8a-8d Moved by Robyne Slade**

Seconded by Belinda Wilkinson

#### **9. General Business**

Father Peter called for General business:

- Vicki Chick thanked everyone at St Matthews who she described as a fabulous team at what she described as a 'seven days a week church'. She thanked those who have been on the current Parish Council for the last three years. She thanked Father Peter for the energy he puts into being Arch Deacon at St Matthew, that he just keeps going & for all that he does.
- Stephanie Stevenson added to Vicki's comments that the strength of St Matthews is that it's about (in the words of Albury High's motto) "Deeds not words".
- Gill Mackay asked if Church Sitting could commence again (since it ceased during the Covid lockdowns) & it will be put on the agenda for the next Parish Council meeting.
- Father Peter thanked Sandy for all that she does at St Matthews, opening up & closing the church each day, for her role in the sanctuary team & presented her with a beautiful bunch of flowers. He also thanked Annette Gorham for the huge amount of work she does as the leader of the Pastoral Care team - people in the Parish know people more due to her efforts. Also the job she does in co-ordinating the Office volunteers at St Matthews, and for extending the care to the four-legged members of the St Matthew's family by finding a paddock nearby for the donkeys to be moved to. He concluded by saying that St Matthews would continue in 2023 its prayerful concern over the war in the Ukraine and we would have the debate around the Uluru statement from the Heart & up-coming referendum on an Indigenous voice to parliament.

Father Peter concluded the meeting with the Grace.

Meeting closed – 10.54 am

#### **Rector's Report 2023 including Mission Action Implementation**

**Pastoral Care and Mission** to assist the community take up the majority of our time and the emergency of food room, Parish Office, Op Shop, Garden, Choir, Organists, Sanctuary Team, Pastoral Care team, Bell Tower, Flowers, Parish Council, Digital Sign, Quiet Communion, Tunes on Tuesday and Chamber Music Festival, Music Association lessons, livestreaming and media involvement through by James Flores, connections with Albury High, The Scott's School and Trinity Anglican College, St Matthew's Village and Craft Group, Children's Church, Mothers Union. Chaplaincy through Albury Wodonga Health are all expressions of our Parish life.

Our **Mission Action Plan** has helped to guide the development of our Parish life.

**Our Sunday Services** often highlight the particular ministries when readers from various parts of the St Matthew's picture are identified, and it remains true that all those who are involved liturgically have another real ministry outside the Church Service. This speaks about integrity and a real presence not just in the Eucharist but in the community where we have been planted. A measure of this connection is found in ongoing relationships with community groups and organisations focused on community welfare. We include service organisations, Defense, Aged and Palliative Care providers, Funeral Directors, Arts and Cultural organisations our Politicians on every level of Government and corporate and community partners.

I join the Parish Council in congratulating our congregation for continuing Covid safe measures in order to safeguard the welfare of our whole community. I believe that it will mean that the practice of handing around the Common Cup will be permanently extinguished while we continue to share the Common Cup through Covid safe protocols. Individual Orders of Service and hand sanitiser continue to be a feature of our services.

The referendum on constitutional recognition of Australia's First Peoples has had a negative effect on the cohesion of our community and St Matthew's declined to support the yes vote in the referendum steering a middle way and that approach has resulted in the affirmation by the majority of our congregation and wider community.

We have returned to handing around the collection plate but many have chosen to continue the Direct-debit and tap-n-go methods of giving and supporting the mission of St Matthew's to the community. It is a reality that while we value our historic connection to the Anglican Communion and the Diocese of Wangaratta the energy and direction of St Matthew's comes from the local congregation and community. Bishop Andrew Curnow has been of immense assistance and support both to me and the Executive of the Parish.

The old rectory building has become the home of St Matthew's Op Shop which has injected new life into the building and new volunteers and much needed funds for our outreach.

**Particular thanks to** Bishop Clarence and Michelle who have continued to forge greater links between the Diocese and St Matthew's. Special thanks to the Wardens - Mark Carden, Victoria Chick and Paul Hare and Parish Council, Annette Gorham and all of our Pastoral and Office Volunteers. Anyone who calls the office at any time will realise that Annette Gorham is rarely at home and we appreciate the understanding of Shaun to enable so much to be accomplished by so few. At a time when Fr Malcolm's family have been greatly challenged through the death of Kate Jessup and Sandra's continued health problems and surgery Fr Malcolm has continued to prepare the Sunday liturgies with the able assistance of Annette, Patricia, Judy and Gillian. We should also note the tremendous support of our Choir in taking up the slack and providing a seamless musical ministry despite the personal commitments of many involved in the task of Liturgy.

Mark Carden has done an amazing job in the areas of finance and Safe Church and Compliance. Deb Davenport has returned one day each week with particular focus on weddings, and administration connected to baptisms and funerals. Our honorary assistant Clergy are a constant source of encouragement and wisdom Fr Malcolm, Rev. Catherine, and Rev. Cathy. Rev. Michelle and Rev. Paul have been helping out in Corowa but continue to be a support as sounding boards and through their Contemplative Communion. Fr Alan Kelb and Rev. Maureen Beattie are always only a phone call away. Our weekly Baptisms are ably supported by Robin Wellard, Sandy and Mother's Union Representatives. The Sanctuary Team is a well-oiled machine running on commitment and total competence. Ray Fietz our Head Verger keeps a watchful eye over our Liturgical celebrations and adds great dignity and order. On Sundays just as Patricia Clout enriches our Wednesday Services with her skillful and sensitively piano choices.

The bellringers add so much to every celebration and the gardeners provide a backdrop which is a sanctuary for worshippers and non-worshippers.

Like Lazarus no sooner had our Craft Group retired but they were back up and creating an impressive array of high-quality gifts and goods and all sold to benefit the work of St Matthew's.

All of our Organists provide a highly specialised service and a special mention to David Luxon who represented St Matthew's at a National Organists Symposium during the year and who continues to play with great skill at our very frequent funerals and celebration of life.

Particular thanks to James Flores who manages our Facebook, Website and Tunes on Tuesday Recitals.

John and Lyn Schuberg and their great team of volunteers in the Op Shop.

Barbara Hoodless Emergency Food Room and the Office team who distribute food hampers, not to forget Trish, Barbara and Suzanne the sorting saviors of the Rectory without whom we would not be going anywhere.

Paul Hare, Mark Carden, Sandy Bobisch and David Sutherland are responsible for a myriad of tasks in preparation and during our services and concerts. We thank them for their expertise, availability and flexibility.

Helen Martin continues her ministry of many years directing the flowers and her skill in refreshing the Pascal Candle flowers is much appreciated.

Our artificial flowers throughout the Church have been renewed following Annie Snow's funeral and we give thanks to the many who have generously donated money to make this possible.

Bryan Baker and David Murray are to be thanked for enabling sheep to magically appear during the year even during the Chamber Music Festival while the donkeys are thriving under the care of Robin Wellard's daughter Helen and ably assisted by Gillian busy multi-tasking.

St Matthew's Pipe Organ 32ft Digital Stop has been a project years in the making and is the mightiest Stop on the organ and fittingly it was a mighty act of generosity particularly in the last period of Jim Williams life that has made this project a reality. Huge thanks also to his family daughter Lisa and Scott.

The Pastoral Care team really came into its own during the Covid period and continues to be one of the most significant parts of our parish life. The Parish is really about people and the Pastoral Care team cares in a practical way. Very often the Pastoral Care team is the first point of contact for people, the follow up is critical and timely and it knits together so much across the Parish family.

We rely so much on each and every organisation and individual that makes up the St Matthew's family and despite the many challenges our profile across the region has never been more important as evidenced by the avalanche of Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals that we are joyfully navigating.

*Best wishes Fr Peter*

**Treasurer's Annual Report** - Please see separate documents.

### **St Matthew's Bell Ringers**

It has been a difficult year for the bellringers with two senior ringers retiring. The remaining stalwarts also had their problems from time to time, and that, combined with COVID 19, often found us struggling for numbers and there were periods when we could not ring.

However, there were visits from three groups throughout the year which boosted our morale and provided some special ringing for the community to hear.

Ringling for weddings is very rare these days, but on the other hand, we have been requested to ring for several funerals as the procession leaves the church environs. This has only been made possible by the generosity of two or three ringers who travel from Beechworth to assist us. Thank you Beechworth ringers! Lately, Barbara Hoodless presented herself for training and has now graduated to service ringing. Georgia Harris, already trained in Wangaratta, moved to Albury, and has become a committed St Matthew's ringer. Welcome Georgia! Finally, Leonie has registered her interest and is about to commence her training. This is all great news, but we still need more recruits to keep the numbers up. We practise on Tuesday at 5 to 6.30 pm and would welcome a visit from anyone who might be interested in learning to ring.

Pam Thorman (Tower Captain)

Jim Jefferies (Ringing Master)

### **Children's Church Report**

This year 2023, was a very positive one for St Matthew's Children's Church. The children really stamp their ownership on the Church environment on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of each month, and the parents have all become friends over morning tea, and beyond! If you know any families who are interested in Children's Church, it is most important to get their email address and names, to the office!

Last year's Dec. 18<sup>th</sup> 2022, was a fun one, with the Christmas story muddled up and the children had to unmuddle it! Sandra McLeod Millar very generously donated a book to each child, which was much appreciated!

Feb. 19<sup>th</sup> 2023 we constructed the large banner which is currently on the Lady Chapel wall.

March 19<sup>th</sup> Children decorated an Easter poster,

April 16<sup>th</sup> Fr. Peter kindly stepped in, as Rev. Catherine had Covid! Kids made their version of the 'Good Shepherd'.

May 21<sup>st</sup> Kids made pinwheels, thinking of the Wind of Pentecost!

June 18<sup>th</sup> Theme was the ever popular 'storm', with blue sheet, thunder, lightning, and soft toys!

July 16<sup>th</sup> Kids planted seeds, provided by Janette!

August 20<sup>th</sup> - our 23<sup>rd</sup> birthday with party!

Sept 17<sup>th</sup> There was a tour of the church and John Scott gave a demonstration of playing the organ and gave some of the children a turn! Children also dressed up in Fr Peter's robes, which was very popular! Some kids said it was the best ever children's church!!

Oct 15<sup>th</sup> there was a recap about the tour, and St. Matthew's former life was highlighted. The kids were invited to fill in the missing parts of both the interior and exterior of the Church.

Nov 19<sup>th</sup> coincided with the Music festival. Mark Carden and team did a very welcome job, reorganizing the new meeting room in the Rectory as a welcoming small worship space for us. A general quiz was enjoyed in this space. Creatively speaking, Janette and Golda did a very impressive job, enabling us to have our usual yummy morning tea, despite the Op Shop being part of the deal! It was a great day, and the families moved outside into the garden, with their drinks.



We Children's Church team are a tight knit group and support each other in this ministry. Fr Peter is always there if needed. Catherine does an amazing job with the liturgy and teaching segments, Patricia Clout plays the piano. Golda, Sandy, Judith Frew-Kleeman, support Janette and I, who always back each other up. The 2023 December C.Church is in early planning stages!  
Julie Scott. C.Church Co-ordinator for M.U. Branch, Albury

### **Mother's Union**

Our branch has had a happy and successful year. We continue to be active under the leadership of 4 past presidents. We currently have 24 financial members and approximately 15 at each meeting.

We meet monthly on the 3rd Tuesday of each month at The Martin Centre at St Matthew's retirement village.

Our years activities included:

Mothering Sunday — providing simnel cake and a small mauve card with rosemary attached, Card "Mothering Sunday is a day of Love" written on it, was handed to all after the church service.

Mothers' Day, a white chrysanthemum attached to a card which said "Motherhood is a vocation", handed to all at the church service.

A quiet day was held in holy week at Jill Aplins home in her beautiful peaceful garden, led by Fr Richard Everitt, this day is open to members and friends.

We attend baptisms and give to a baby or adult a small book of prayers for a child and a bible to an adult, a small hand knitted teddy to a baby plus the MU baptism card.

We assist Rev Catherine Dawson with children's church each month.

We gather for "coffee and chat" first Tuesday of each month at a local restaurant called Purple Chicken which trains young people with a disability to go out into the work force in the community.

Our year starts with a picnic in the botanical gardens in January, cancelled this year due to extreme heat on the day.

Feb was our first meeting was at 5 pm, Fr Peter attended and celebrated a eucharist for us, followed by a short meeting and a delicious meal provided for us by our secretary Kirsty, pancakes for sweets as it was Shrove Tuesday.

Gold coins were collected for overseas and northern outreach.

It was decided not to facilitate a pancake event in the parish this year due to it being our meeting day and age of our members, we had done this for the last 34 years.

Some members attended Lady Day celebrations at the Cathedral in Wangaratta, the focus of the day was a very informative activity on domestic violence and the churches response, and our Stephanie received her 25 year badge.

Our first guest speaker for the year was Jen Tait from Purple chicken.

Rowena Ginns our member led us through preparing for a funeral, a very worthwhile activity to help family and friends.

Jenny Jensen spoke to us about her family trip to Israel, she belongs to ICEJ (International, Christian, Embassy, Jerusalem) an organisation that aims to help Christians make a deeper connection with Israel, the land where our faith began.

Belinda our welfare officer (who sends cards to members family and friends in sad time and happy times) spoke to us about her many pen friends.

In September we went to Albury golf club for lunch just for fun, we had two guests.

Wave of prayer was led by our prayer co- Ordinator Sue, she had done an amazing amount of research into the countries we are linked with in South Africa, the treatment of women and girls in these countries is horrific, she brought a world map with the countries highlighted for which we pray, a small battery candle lit placed on each country during the prayers.

We attended World Day of Prayer this year held at St Matthew's?

We attended Mary Sumner Day in Wangaratta on 9-8-23

Our October birthday meeting was celebrated at The Martin Centre, we were very pleased to welcome our diocesan president Jan Craig, she admitted a new member Sandra, we were also pleased to welcome our diocesan secretary / treasurer Fr David Holloway.

We were celebrating our 35th birthday, every member brought food to share for lunch and a birthday cake to share.

A birthday cake is provided each month for girls celebrating their birthday that month.  
All of our meetings commence with a prayer service from our prayer and worship book.  
Our November meeting will be our AGM, it will be at St Matthew's at 6pm, Fr Peter will celebrate the eucharist for us and it will be followed by the meeting and a byo tea.  
On behalf of MU Albury. Janette Kettyle

### **Choir and Music Report**

The choir has continued to meet for weekly rehearsals on Thursday evenings, and for half an hour before the morning service and the monthly Choral Evensong.

Our membership has dropped slightly this year, with 15 singers, but maintained an average attendance at services of 12.

Each Sunday we prepare a psalm setting, and an anthem to be sung during the distribution of communion, together with the regular music and choral parts of the Anglican liturgy.

The choir and/or organists have also made themselves available for occasional services, such as the Field of Remembrance Service at Anzac Day, Remembrance Day Services on November 11<sup>th</sup>, the Albury Chamber Music festival, and Cathy Carden's ordination to the priesthood service at the Cathedral.

I want to pay tribute to the unwavering support of each of the choir members during this past year and thank them for their work. I would particularly thank Bec Beall who, along with her many other commitments, conducts the choir at Sunday services, and has made herself available on a number of occasions to take the Thursday choir rehearsal when I have not been available. John Scott too, continues to be a pillar of support, playing for a number of services, for which I am very grateful.

Fr Peter and I meet most Tuesday mornings to review and plan the liturgy and especially the music which forms such an important part. And I thank him for his unwavering support and also for his friendship.

As we begin this new church year, we never tire of providing the choral music which is such an important part of our Anglican tradition. If you would like to join us, you would be very welcome! Please mention it to me or to Fr Peter, and we'll look to work together in 2024!

*Malcolm Halford,*

*Principal Organist and Choir Director*

### **Craft and Embroidery Group**

At the AGM 2023 the Craft Group learned of the resignation of our esteemed Leader and co-ordinator Sadie Moffitt. Sadie has established and organised this group for many years earning thousands of dollars from sales of home crafted goods. The monies raised going towards Church items of necessity.

We are a small band of parishioners who meet, on a monthly basis, at each other's homes, enjoying friendship and laughter over a cuppa, whilst learning the techniques to create quality saleable items under the watchful guidance of Sadie.

Sadie graduated in the 1950's as a teacher in Women's Handcrafts, which also included Fashion design, Millinery, soft furnishing, tailoring, embroidery, quilting and general Craft. How fortunate we are to have such a versatile experienced teacher to guide us? After the AGM and with much discussion re the possibility of disbanding, we decided, with Sadie's Blessing, to continue by taking on shared responsibilities to lessen the role of co-ordinating the group activities. Sadie remains our Team Leader, with everything created made with lots of love and professional supervision.

During the past 12 months we have raised \$1,890 with money still coming in for our Christmas Stall. On behalf of the team, I wish to thank most sincerely all the Parishioners who have continued to support us either by purchasing or with donations of handcrafted garments (knitted and sewn) Robin Gibbs and Helen Martin for stocking the Plant Stalls, and our team member Leanyi for offering to organise cake stalls. Last Sunday Kate Aldridge surprised us with 3 magnificent Christmas Cakes which were professionally iced by her. They literally sold like "hot cakes!" Sincere thanks Kate for this very special Christmas contribution to our fundraising effort. Kate is indeed an extremely talented lady in another craft! Also a special thanks of gratitude must go to Annette for not only her interest in the group but her expert help with management, advertising and organisational skills through Church activities and notices. Our group is now in recess until 2024 when we'll resume first Wednesday in February. Always looking for new folk - please come and join us, you are most welcome!

Wishing you all a peaceful & joyous Christmas filled with Love & Happiness.

The Team: Jill, Sadie, Julie, Fran Lola Helen and Leoni

### **Emergency Food Program**

This year a staggering 638 food hampers have been distributed from St Matthew's into our community. Averaging over 50 a month. We have also given out vouchers to be redeemed from the Foodshare store in Wigg Street, Wodonga where a greater choice of food is available.

Food included in our food hampers provide for breakfast, a main meal, light meals and snacks.

Most of the food is purchased from supermarkets and some food is sourced from Foodshare Wodonga.

Thank you to the many parishioners who generously donate food items each week into the trolleys at church and also cash for purchase of groceries. Thanks also to the staff at St Matthew's office who distribute food hampers every day to those members of our community who seek support from our church.

Christmas hampers are being given out during December and we are currently compiling a list of our regulars who would like one of these special hampers containing staples and a few treats for the festive season.

Barbara Hoodless Co Ordinator Emergency Food Program

### **St Matthew's Op Shop**

The exciting event this year was the move into the former Rectory. This was a mammoth task, and some fine tuning is still taking place. Many thanks to all those who helped with the move. The banner and tear drop flags have helped to direct customers into our new location. New volunteers comment about the friendliness and support of the staff. So, 'Why not come and join us?' You may volunteer on a regular basis or on a casual (fill-in) basis. Donations of bric-a-brac are particularly welcome all year round. Please tell your friends about our new location and don't forget our motto 'The Shop Worth the Hop.'

John and Lyn Schuberg

### **Pastoral Care**

The Pastoral Care Team meet each month to discuss and put into action new ideas and ways to connect with, support and help all in our parish and community.

We hold services in seven Retirement Village and Nursing Homes each month and have developed a close rapport with Pastoral Care and Lifestyle teams at each facility. I prepare services as a PPT for Dellacourt and Yallaroo which residents find easier to follow and manage. The service includes Holy Communion, readings, prayers and hymns and informal chat. The music is a really important aspect for residents to participate in and bring joy. Thank you to Sue Fyfe who plays the piano at Marianella, Borella House, Dellacourt and Yallaroo. Our Bluetooth device works well at Riverwood, Murray Gardens and Estia Thurgoona. Overall, the number of residents attending our services has increased throughout the year. Often additional visits with our aged care friends are followed up after each service.

Requests for/or when informed about people not well, hospital visits, aged care visits, and personal requests to visit are followed up and visited by Fr Peter, or one of the team. Fr Peter, sometimes Annette, visit people in Palliative Care almost immediately on request, and often several times. A card and small beaded ring with cross, is given so they know God is holding them in His care. A big thank you to Kirrilie and Stevie for making the beaded finger crosses.

3 Prayer/Hymn/blessing bookmark/card - Lord of all Hopefulness, I the Lord of Sea and Sky and the Lord Bless You and Keep You, have been designed and printed to give to our friends at age care services and parishioners, these have been well received.

Our 'Keeping Connected to our St Matthew's Family' Newsletter plays an important pastoral role connecting and bringing people together when distance keeps us physically apart. Our email groups are continually updated with more people now receiving the Newsletter both in Albury and the wider community. The focus for our newsletter is to provide positive, good news, current events, feature photos of familiar and new faces and photos of our beautiful St Matthew's Garden throughout the seasons. Delivery of the newsletter to our friends in retirement villages and nursing homes is of high importance as it provides the opportunity to visit many people on a regular basis. We are so thankful for all the positive feedback and kind donations we receive.

Our 'Acts of Kindness' rugs continue to be an important gift to those who are sick or in hospital, in nursing homes/retirement villages, especially in times with restricted or no visitors allowed. The giving of rugs with a 'Thinking of You' card, plays a huge part in brightening people's days. Thank you to all who make donations towards wool or have knitted/crocheted rugs this year. It is a great way of engaging people in caring for others and sharing the ministry of practical caring. We also have pot pouring sachets, made by St Matthew's Craft group as an alternate kindness gift. The range of 'Thinking of you' cards has expanded featuring St Matthew's Church and garden and are given on a very regular basis throughout the year. Pastoral Services such as Weddings, Baptisms, and Funerals play an important part in our parish family and wider community. More than 46 Funerals have been planned and organised this last year. This has a strong Pastoral role providing comfort and support to families when planning the funeral/memorial service for their loved one. It involves meeting with families to talk through and personalise the order of service to make it special, writing the service, assisting in the service, and continued follow up and contact with families following the funeral and sending our Bereavement Card to each family in the weeks following the funeral. We are so very thankful for all the beautiful cards, emails, and messages we receive thanking us for our caring thoughts, support and for thinking of them during their time of loss. Our Easter and Christmas cards are a valuable way we let people know we are thinking and caring about them. They are sent to parish members who are sick, in nursing homes and retirement villages and to families who have lost a loved one. A new design/s for Easter and Christmas cards are created each year, and we print and send to over 180 people.

Our Phone Tree System continues to help maintain contact with so many people unable to attend church, see family or have friends visit. The number of people contacted varies as needs arise and change, and often includes helping transport people to Dr appointments and surgery procedures, organising their Wills and appointments with a Solicitor and shopping. Our team follow up requests for visitation and phone calls, with home visits often arranged following the phone contact. An increased need is helping people with technology so they can watch our services and Tunes on Tuesday Recitals on YouTube when unable to attend Church.

The Pastoral Care Team help organise special services for Thanksgiving, Ash Wednesday, Easter, All Saint's and All Soul's Day - Remembering our Loved Ones Service, Advent and Christmas.

A special fundraiser event to raise money for St Matthew's Emergency care was organised in May featuring Melinda Schneider - 'Melinda Sings Songs of Hope'. This was a very positive, uplifting and joyous concert. Melinda will return to St Matthew's to sing with Paul Gibbs, Lux Alba and St Matthew's Choir at our 'Songs for Hope and Prayers for Peace and Goodwill' Service 17th December at 5pm.

The 'Memory Tree' at Christmas continues to be part of Advent for keeping memories of loved ones alive in our mind and heart and is well received with over 125 tags written and put on the tree last year.

We are very thankful for the donations received specifically to assist Pastoral Care in our parish and community and for helping people in need.

We are about 'Kindness in God's Loving Action', caring for and connecting with all people, putting into action new ideas when something needs to be done to make a difference.

I sincerely thank and value each member of our team - Fr Peter, Robin Wellard, and Karen Buchner for their continued commitment, support and friendship. Gill Mackay retired from our team earlier this year and we sincerely thank Gill for her years of devotion, commitment and caring for so many people in our parish. Thank you to the Church Wardens for their support and encouragement throughout the year.

Annette Gorham, Leader Pastoral Care Team.

### **Safe Church Report**

As last year was an election year within the Diocese, all parishioners elected to positions and other roles within the Parish needed to undergo a new clearance cycle. 43 parishioners were subsequently cleared in the past 12 months.

An interesting fact is that in 2018 the number of clearances was 59, with the variation due to a number of parishioners retiring from roles or leaving the Parish.

I thank everyone who completed the required paperwork and undertook the online training. It is acknowledged that some people experienced challenges working with the online system and your perseverance has been appreciated. People who still need to complete the level 2 online training will shortly receive a reminder.

As the Diocese clearance cycle is three years and the WWCC cycle is five years, we will also see the expiry of a number of WWCC's in the coming 12 months. Where possible, a reminder message will also be issued advising of the need to renew the WWCC.

Mark Carden 2 Dec 2023

### **St Matthew's Village**

St Matthew's Village has had a quiet and successful 12 months. Residents are happy and enjoy each other's company. St Matthew's Church and The Board of the Village have continued to work together to stay in touch with all Parishioners and the Village residents. The Sunday service at St Matthews is taped each week and can be viewed on You Tube and the Keeping Connected Newsletter is distributed each month to Village residents. This has been welcomed at the Village and life has continued to be one of stability and growth in a happy and positive environment.

The Board is continuing to review the Village's business model and strategic plan to ensure it remains viable and meets the future needs of the local community. More of the Units that have become available are also being rented, this was being done by BDM Leasing, however the sale of BDM to Ray White Central has seen Ray White take over the leases at the Village.

Our Manager, Brian Elliott, retired last Christmas and we have employed Ray White Central to take on the Management duties, including maintenance of the units, after a settling period this now seems to be working well.

The success of the Village has continued to be achieved through good working relationships with dedicated Board members, we welcome Paul Hare and Stephanie Stephenson to the Board this year. Paul has also taken on the lawns and gardening.

We have 5 units at the back of the Village that are the original one bedroom or bedsitter units, built in the 60's. These units were renovated before COVID and have new kitchens, floorcoverings and Air-conditioners.

We have used them for people needing accommodation at a low rental. This has had its challenges. There are only four units rented out, three are wonderful tenants who bring much joy to The Village life. One tenant has been very difficult and very dirty. We offered him this accommodation after he had been living in his car for 5 years. We had to employ a forensic cleaner to clean his unit and we had to replace his floor coverings. This has come at a high cost. Our attempts to move him on had not been successful.

Last Friday morning he wilfully destroyed the unit. He maliciously superglued all the electrical outlets, superglued the cupboards and bathroom doors shut,

He put quick set concrete into the sewer pipes and into the toilet bowl, spread paint everywhere and graffiti all over all the walls.

This means we are now faced with a huge clean-up bill, a forensic cleaner again and replacement of furnishings. This has been devastating for all of us but we will go forward and not allow this one bad person to ruin things for anyone else.

On a happier note the gardens are looking magnificent and they are greatly enjoyed by the residents. The Martin Centre is well used and a great asset to the Village.

I take this opportunity to sincerely thank all Board Members who have continued to support the Village, I would like to thank Mark Carden, our treasurer, for his thorough management of the Village accounts and for the many hours he spends on Village business.

Thank you to my fellow Board members for your support throughout the year. We look forward to the continuing happiness in the Village for the future.

Victoria Chick Chairperson

### **St Matthew's Music Association**

On behalf of the Committee, I am glad to present our Annual Report.

St. Matthew's Music Association has continued to provide training for young musicians.

The Music Association continues to provide funds for the maintenance and development of the Letourneau Organ in St Matthew's Church. Early next year will see the addition of a 32 inch digital organ stop. The organ continues to attract organists from all over Australia, it is by far the most distinguished

musical instrument in the region. The Association has enabled more young organists to emerge which is a tribute to our amazing organists at St Matthew's.

This year the Association has provided music tuition across many disciplines, we have had 5 piano scholars , 3 singing scholars ,2 cello scholars , 1 trumpet scholar and 2 organ scholars . We are extremely lucky to have the support in the community that allows these scholarships to be available to young country musicians.

We are committed to facilitating performance opportunities for local musicians. These platforms (like our regular Tunes on Tuesday Recital Series) serve as an essential stepping stone for our musicians, providing them with valuable exposure, experience, and the opportunity to share their musical talents with appreciative audiences. Tunes on Tuesday has continued fortnightly throughout the year and has a regular and wonderful audience for each recital.

The Albury Chamber Music Festival is an initiative of St Matthew's Music Association, November 2023 saw our sixth Festival with our outstanding Artistic Directors, Sally-Anne Russell and Mario Dobernig at the helm. The Festival was a sellout and next year's festival dates were announced and already tickets have been booked. The quality of the musicians was exceptional, and visitors came from all over Australia for the three day festival.

I take this opportunity to sincerely thank Peter Reilly OAM and Linton Soderholm for their great support and Sponsorship of both the Melbourne Launch and the Festival through Scotchman's Hill Winery. Many thanks to Doctor Beavis for his great support and encouragement of the Association. thank you to James Flores for his leadership of Tunes on Tuesday, his technical help with our web pages and You Tube presentations and for his outstanding musical skill. Finally a huge thank you to our tireless committee who support everything the Association stands for .

Victoria Chick

## **Properties and Maintenance**

### **1) Work Completed**

2023 has been a rewarding year with a number of projects, previously delayed during CoVid, being completed. These have included:

- a) Replacement of all lights within the Church with LED lights. We are already seeing savings in the electricity accounts.
- b) Installation of 2nd video camera looking back at choir, organ and warrior chapel.
- c) Installation of a small flat screen monitor above the organ keyboard so the organist can see what is happening in the Narthex, Sanctuary and Warriors' Chapel.
- d) Preparation has been completed inside the Organ for the installation of the two 32foot stops and the 16foot stop. We are expecting the arrival of key components from the USA very soon.
- e) Air filters for the church air conditioner have been replaced.

### **2) Rectory**

Plans to redevelop the rectory site in conjunction with Bellbridge Hague Solicitors have been taken off the table. This has mainly been due to insurmountable hurdles when it came to heritage restrictions for the Rectory building. The challenge now is that after many years of not spending money on the Rectory building, as it was about to be knocked down, we now find repairs are required to make it fit for purpose.

Consequently, to accommodate the OP Shop moving into the Rectory, we have had to carry out the following works this year.

- f) Make the staircase safe with new floor treads and carpet
- g) Replacing the carpet in the meeting room.
- h) Painting the meeting room and the external front façade.
- i) Replace the air-conditioning unit in the meeting room
- j) Roof and gutters at the rear of the rectory were recently urgently cleared to avoid flooding of the new OP shop. A major drain out to the street was also cleared as it was completely blocked with tree roots.

### **3) Highgrove**

Thankfully the maintenance required for the Highgrove Place rental property has been far less than previous years.

#### 4) **Priorities 2024**

Work identified as a priority for 2024 includes:

- k) Replace roof and gutters above the kitchen in the rectory
- l) Fix loose and broken slates on church roof.
- m) Fix failed fire sensors in the church ceiling (very high ceiling is a challenge/expense)
- n) Investigate cost effective solution to rising damp and salt in the church walls.

#### 5) **Community Services**

St Matthews has been fortunate to be part of the NSW Community Service program with 3 people providing a total of 10 hours per week of cleaning and lawn mowing services. I would like to thank Paul Hare for the time he has spent on a weekly basis providing supervision for the program participants.

Mark Carden 1 Dec

#### **St Matthew's Garden and Memorial Garden**

The gardening team aims to continue to maintain the garden as a space for all to enjoy as a bolt-hole from life's busyness, a quiet reading/meditating spot or just a seat surrounded by beauty in which to enjoy a coffee.

Most Saturday mornings see gardeners in action – pruning, planting, weeding and sweeping paths – the latter often happening too during the week – thank you Peter Knight.

The Memorial Garden with gardenias and the deciduous magnolia is establishing well as the Daphnes along the post-office wall. Other plants as memorials to loved ones include lilliums, paeonies and English lavenders.

The urns are replanted seasonally with annuals for long-lasting colour.

This Spring has seen some of the common jonquils re-located within the garden in order to introduce a little more colour and interest in up-front spots.

The Tobruk fig tree will be an important memorial feature on the southside of the garden having already elicited extensive interest from descendants of that famous WW2 event. The Diocesan orange tree has been planted, temporarily, in a large pot.

Anyone interested in some hands-on gardening is always welcome to join our gardeners.

The Gardeners

Robyn Gibbs

#### **Parish Office Organisation**

Pastoral Ministry is part of the day-to-day running of St Matthew's Office. Very positive feedback has been received from parishioners and community about the friendly welcome and help they received when they come to St Matthew's. Our Office Team roster system continues to work efficiently. A great team of 11 volunteers rotate on a weekly/fortnightly basis each month, and each have completed the Diocese requirements. We meet every 3 months to keep informed and updated on current events/things happening, discuss new ideas and improvements and ensure all is going well.

The distribution and recording system of the food hampers, frozen meals, personal items, laundromat tokens and clothing continues to work well. This has been a great help with the increased demand from so many people coming for assistance each day. Accommodation requests are also followed up.

Daily tasks and jobs vary, and specific tasks are allocated on particular days. Tasks include: finalising and printing weekly Orders of Service and Evensong Service, emailing the invitation to families for Children's Church and print service booklet, emailing invitation to Tunes on Tuesday Recitals and printing program each fortnight, preparing Baptism kits; managing the Outlook email system, calendar and diary; organising readers, Eucharist Assistants and Presenting gifts rosters for services; recording messages and follow up; collecting mail, updating the parish roll and as well as daily tasks of answering the phone, and all the people coming to the office for food hampers etc.

We greatly appreciate and value Deb Davenport's presence in the Office each Tuesday in the role of Administration, in particular the banking, registrations and paperwork required for weddings, baptisms and funerals. Deb also assists Fr Peter with daily requests, bookings, checking, following up and responding to emails.

Victoria Chick is in charge of all the bookings for the Church and Adamshurst.

Annette Gorham continues to coordinate the Office team and help in the Office several afternoons each week. She produces the Keeping Connected Newsletter, assists with orders of service (when needed) and services for funerals/memorials/Internment of Ashes. She maintains and updates the Indexed A-Z folder with to assist all in the office and coordinates the APM reports and booklet for the annual APM.

The Electronic Noticeboard is now managed by Annette, and we sincerely thank Paul Wood for fulfilling this role from the start and for showing Annette how to use it. It involves creating and updating slides in Bright Author on a weekly basis to inform all in our parish and community of services, themes reflecting the Church calendar and local events. This is a great practical contact with our community, and we have received very positive feedback that it is making a difference with increased numbers attending services/events.

A huge Thank you to Malcolm Halford for continuing to prepare the Order of Service for each Sunday and Evensong Services.

Thank you to Barbara Hoodless for the terrific job she does preparing all the food hampers and keeping our team informed and attending our Office meetings. Thank you to Trish and Don Lloyd, Barbara and Malcolm Ross, Suzanne Grant for their dedication to sorting and organising all the personal items, clothes etc.

Thanks also to Robyn White for her help with sorting and in the office while living in Albury this last year.

We are so very thankful and greatly appreciate our team of volunteers - Robin Wellard, Gillian Pearce, Judy Kennedy, Barry and Janice Barton, Patricia Clout, Shirley Sizeland, Mary Stitz, Leanne Johnson and Gwen Bradley for their assistance and time to help keep the office at St Matthew's open each day and running smoothly.

We look forward to continuing similar organisation in 2024.

Thank you, Annette Gorham

*We particularly remember our loved ones who have been farewelled this year:*

Fr Bill GINNS	Flo SCHUBERG	Diana ASHLEY	Kay WEST
Michael SEXTON	Kate JESSOP	Fr Rob WHALLEY	Austin FORREST
Roma JONES	Joan TRESCOWTHICK	Lorna 'Kik' WATSON	Beryl McNICOL
Wilma FRANCE	Maxwell CARRETT	Graham JOHNSTON	Patricia GOULD
Jennifer EVERSON	Given FRIEDRICH	Donald FIELDER	Lindsay ANTONE
John SLOANE	Beverley SKEEN	Douglas ROLLS	George DOSENKO
Rona JARRETT	James 'Jim' LEE	Joan SHEATHER	Gordon McKISSACK
Jenny MACKINNON	Leslie SOBEY	Annie SNOW	Lois BEST
William TRACY	Joan MERRIMAN	Jim WILLIAMS	Warren JONES
Keith CARDEN	Eve ROSS	Catherine BAILLIE	Elaine ABRECHT
Janet NAGLE	Valerie JOHNSTON	Harold NICHOLLS	Dorothy MYERS
Rylee WRIGHT	Carolyn SIMPSON	Basil BILNEY	